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Speaking Errors



**English Department
Faculty of Languages and Literature
State University of Makassar**

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Table of Contents

Volume 07, Number 1, January 2010

ISSN 1412-0003

The Students' English Achievement Based On Interaction Modes Using
Computer Assisted Language Learning
Nurdin Noni1-8 ✓

Increasing Reading Comprehension of EFL Students through SQRMS
Procedure
Arifuddin Hamra & Eny Syatriana.....9-14

CTL: Toward a Joyful and Meaningful Learning
La Sunra.....15-22

The Use Of Online Virtual World To Develop The University Students'
Verbal Communication
Rizki Israeni S. Nur.....23-29

Building Local Area Network (LAN) and Installing Senayan Library
Automation Web Content Management System (WCMS) to Enrich the
English Teaching at Schools
Abdul Rajab Johari30-37

The Semiotic Mediation to an Understanding of the Ritual Text of "Barazanji"
Abdul Halim.....38-45

English Language Teaching in Primary Schools: A Case Study in Makassar
Rosmaladewi.....46-54

Researching Biliteracy Development and Bilingualism in Australian Social
Contexts
Muhammad Basri55-73

Teachers' Competence In Developing Authentic-Based Material Through
Workshop
Irmawati74-87

Empowering Large Class through Cooperative Learning
Andi Hudriati.....88-97

Speaking Errors
Kaimuddin. P.....98-109

Acknowledgements
Checklist for Article Contributors
Guidelines for Contributors

THE STUDENTS' ENGLISH ACHIEVEMENT BASED ON INTERACTION MODES USING COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to find out the learning interaction modes the students prefer and their achievement gained through the use of computer assisted language learning (CALL) programs in relation to the interaction modes at the English Department of UNM. The subjects of the research were the second semester students selected purposively. The instruments of the research were questionnaires and tests. The data were analyzed by using frequency and percentage distribution, mean analysis, and ANOVA. The findings indicated that the students tended to *work individually* when being exposed to CALL activities. However, they preferred to choose *working with a partner* in any learning environment and *full-class interaction* in the classroom setting. This implies that the CALL environment shifted the students to become more independent learners. Even though, they were different in the learning interaction they prefer, they demonstrated no different achievement. Thus, it can be concluded that the face-to-face teaching supported by CALL programs accommodated the differences in their learning interaction modes.

Key words: EFL, CALL, learning interaction, achievement

INTRODUCTION

In EFL teaching, one of the major aspects that must be considered is the learning interaction. The patterns of interaction include *student – teacher interaction*, *student-student interaction*, and *student-material interaction*. It should be kept in mind that the patterns of interaction should be to create favorable language learning atmosphere for students. Therefore, the teacher

should consider these various patterns of interaction in varying his/her teaching strategies in activating the students to learn and practice the target language they are learning.

According to Counihan (1998: 1), interaction involves both social and personal input, and, forms the basis of the vast majority of everyday talking done by natives. Interaction involves the emotions, creativity, agreement,

disagreement, people waiting patiently to get in a word, sighing, nodding, gesticulating and so on. Interaction is not waiting to be asked a question. Interaction is not giving a short, one-sentence answer to this question. In some ways, what goes on in a worst-case EFL conversation class is a series of monologues.

In this regard, there are some modes of interactive activities that may occur and should become the other important aspects to consider in foreign language classroom interaction. There are five modes of interactive activities investigated in this research and they are considered to promote communicative target language learning. They are as follows:

- *Individual*

This interaction mode is set up for students to work individually. The interaction may occur between students and lecturer or material. In this regard, the lecturer gives a task or set of tasks, and students work on them independently; the teacher walks around monitoring and assisting where necessary.

With a Partner

This kind of interaction allows student to work with either another student or/and the lecturer. The interaction between one student and another student maybe carried out in the form of pair work. The teacher's first role is to provide tasks or conversation questions of a decided topic. The students, then, may do

the task in pairs or interview each other by using the conversation questions. The lecturer – student interaction in “with a partner” mode can be performed in the form of consultative technique. The lecturer role is to provide and ask questions to the student and respond to student talk. The purpose of the questions should encourage the students to communicate in English. The students are expected to actively answer the lecturer's questions.

- *Collaboration*

Students do the same sort of tasks as in ‘individual work’, but work together, usually in pairs, to try to achieve the best results they can. The lecturer may or may not intervene. (Note that this is different from ‘Group Work’, where the task itself necessitates interaction).

- *Group*

Students work in small groups on tasks that entail interaction: conveying information, for example, or group decision-making. The teacher walks around listening, intervenes little if at all. Pooling ideas is one of the examples of group work activity. Based on certain topic along with clues provided by the teacher, each member of the group is asked to contribute his/her ideas and opinion. They may also come to the other group to get some more ideas of the same topic.

Discussion is another example of small group activity that is very common in the classroom interaction. This should contribute to the development of student autonomy. In implementing a classroom discussion, Green, Christopher, and Lam (1997) suggest the procedure of three-phase technique consisting of: (a) **pre-discussion** including forming the groups and identifying and organizing the topic, (b) **discussion** including peer observation and evaluation and keeping reflective journal, and (c) **post-discussion**. At the end of the session, each group reports their consensus of a topic represented by the group leader.

- *Full Class*

In this interaction, the students debate a topic or do a language task as a class; the teacher may intervene occasionally, to stimulate participation or to monitor. The teacher, first of all, decides the topic for the students to debate on. The teacher may shortly explain the topic and expose the related vocabulary. In the debate, the students are to agree or disagree to the given case, along with their argument and reason.

This research also dealt with the use of computer to aid language learning. Many claim that computer can be interactively used to aid EFL teaching. Some researchers have proved the success of the use of computer in EFL teaching (Noni, 2002, Rasyid, Noni, & Baso, 2001; Shulman, 2001; Choi & Nesi, 1999; & Graus, 1999; &

Rosetti, 1998). Computer is claimed to potentially influence the classroom atmosphere. It emerges as a prominent technology in promoting the development of education. In EFL teaching, it brings new perspective. However, in Indonesia, especially in South Sulawesi, it is realized that the use of the computer in formal educational institutions is mostly restricted to clerical work. Moreover, many teachers do not have sufficient computer literacy. Many also do not realize the potential the computer can have in second and foreign language classroom. As a result, the students are rarely/never exposed to computer-based English learning programs, which is usually called computer assisted language learning (CALL). In short, the CALL programs are still neglected in many EFL classroom settings in South Sulawesi, especially at the State University of Makassar.

The research questions are as follows: (i) What interaction modes do the students prefer with the use of computer to complement face-to-face teaching? (ii) Do the students who are different in their preference on interaction modes have different level of achievement in relation to the use of computer to complement face-to-face teaching?

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was pre-experimental with one-group pretest-posttest design. It consisted of English achievement as dependent variable and computer use and learning interaction modes as independent variables. The

treatment was carried out in the form of a pilot study on the use of computer to complement face-to-face teaching. It lasted along the semester with eighteen meetings of two teaching hours each. The procedure consisted of planning, teaching-learning process, and evaluation.

The research sample consisted of 35 second semester students of the Business English Study Program of State University of Makassar of the second semester which were purposively chosen from the population of 286 students. This research employed two different instruments based on the variables investigated, i.e. questionnaire of learning interaction modes and achievement test.

The data obtained from questionnaire were analyzed using frequency and percentage distribution and mean score and data from the achievement test were analyzed using t-test. The data concerning the differences in learning interaction preferences pertinent to achievement were analyzed by employing Oneway ANOVA.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents findings and discussion of the research which include the modes of interaction in relation to their achievement.

The Interaction Modes the Students Prefer based on the Use of Computer to Complement Face-to-Face Teaching

There are five modes of learning interaction investigated in this study, namely *individual work*, *working with a partner*, *collaboration*, *group work*, and *full-class interaction*. The students were asked to rank these modes according to the given environments or settings, namely in *any learning environment*, in the *CALL environment*, and in the *classroom interaction*. The finding shows that the most preferred modes were *working with a partner* in any learning environment, *individual work* in the CALL environment, and *full-class interaction* in the classroom setting. On the other hand, the least preferred modes were *full-class interaction* in any learning and CALL environment, and *individual work* in the classroom interaction. On the whole, the most preferred one was *working with a partner* followed successively by individual work, collaboration, group work, and full-class interaction.

It is interesting to note that the students were inclined to opt to work individually when being exposed to CALL activities. This finding is also supported by the students' option on item 35 of the questionnaire, in which most of them gained confidence in their abilities as independent learners. The interactivity that the computer-based materials could deliver might be the possible reason for the students to prefer individual work in the CALL environment. With respect to this, Lee (2000) also claims that individualization is one of the reasons for using CALL. It is, then, apparent that the CALL programs affected the students to prefer individual learning. However, this does not mean that the teacher's roles in

monitoring and facilitating them are not needed.

Based on the description above, it can be confirmed that it is strongly recommended that two of the interaction modes, *individual work* and *working with a partner*, be implemented when deciding to integrate an EFL teaching with the CALL programs. The advantages of the individual work were that the students could freely interact with the materials displayed in the computer monitor and got instant feedback from which they could learn from their mistakes. Working with a partner was also very beneficial for students to practice the target language. They could interact with both the displayed materials and their mate. In this interaction mode, the students could use the displayed materials as a point of departure for their dyad CALL-based activities in the classroom setting. Moreover, the lecturer could also set up the activities where the students could interact either synchronously or asynchronously using the software that had been prepared. By these activities, the students were exposed to the real use of the target language. This could only be possible because the facilities and equipment in the computer lab of Business English Study Program were supporting.

The Students' Achievement

The treatment was conducted by implementing the use of computer to complement the face-to-face teaching. It was carried out in one semester with 18 (eighteen) meetings of 2 contact hours each. The classes were done either in

the computer lab or in the conventional classroom. The materials covered the language elements, namely vocabulary and structure, and four language skills, namely listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Listening and speaking were mainly done in the conventional classroom.

For the first two meetings, the sessions focused on familiarizing the students with computer skills and fewer activities done in relation to subject matters. The students who were already familiar with the computer application were asked to help their friends. Most students reflected that they were very excited and wanted to have longer time to interact with the computer based activities.

The result showed that the mean score of the students' posttest increased compared to pretest, namely from 49 (fail category) to 79 (good category). In other words, the students' achievement improved after receiving treatments with the use of computer to complement the face-to-face teaching. This means that the use of computer in English language learning should be considered as one of the strategies in improving the students' achievement of English as a foreign language.

The result above was further analyzed using One-Sample T-test statistical procedure to find out whether or not the students' mean scores of pretest and posttest are different at the 0.05 level of significance. The result shows that the mean scores of the students in their pretest and posttest are significantly different. This indicates

that the use of computer to complement face-to-face teaching could significantly contribute to the improvement of the students' English language learning achievement.

The Students' Level of Achievement in Relation to Their Preference on Interaction Modes with the Use of Computer to Complement Face-To-Face Teaching

Based on the testing of statistical hypothesis, it is found that H_0 is accepted, which means that the English learning achievements of the students are identical for the various learning interaction modes, except *individual work* which is excluded in the analysis. In other words, the students with different learning modes, *namely working with a partner, collaboration, group work, and full-class interaction*, are not significantly different in their achievement. This indicates that the students were equally favored by the implementation of the use of CALL in EFL teaching. This could be made possible due to the lecturer's roles in planning and exploiting the CALL-based EFL teaching that could provide various modes of learning interaction. This bears out the previous statement that involving students in computer usage (Internet) promotes a variety of activities and desirable learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

In terms of learning interaction, the interesting finding is that the

students were inclined to opt to *work individually* when being exposed to CALL activities. This is very different from the other two environments, in which the students preferred to choose *working with a partner* in any learning environment and *full-class interaction* in the classroom setting. This implies that the CALL environment shifted the students to become more independent learners. Even though, they were different in the learning interaction they prefer, they demonstrated no different achievement. Thus, it can be concluded that the use of computer to complement face-to-face teaching accommodated the differences in their learning interaction modes.

Suggestions

The English Department as one of the units at UNM responsible for the improvement of EFL teaching should be a reference for the implementation of CALL in enhancing the students' opportunities to practice and use English as a foreign language. Therefore, all staff at the unit should have commitment to make this happen. Since the use of computer in EFL teaching needs basic computer literacy for both students and teachers, there should be a computer short-term training for those who are still illiterate in computer use provided by related institutions.

The computer use in EFL teaching can be a new issue to teachers/lecturers. Therefore, it is suggested that this be wisely introduced through training and workshop.

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Nurdin Noni

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